

News-Letter - September 2006

FIRST LECTURE OF THE SEASON FEATURES THOMAS O'CONNOR

The ever-popular Thomas H. O'Connor, Ph.D, author and lecturer, will present a lecture on Thursday, September 21, at 7:30 PM. The topic is the subject of his new book, *The Athens of America*. The cost is \$5 for non-members with no charge for members.

Dr. O'Connor, University Historian at Boston College will talk about a fascinating period of Boston's history, during the generation before the Civil War, roughly between 1825 and 1845, when the city was known as *The Athens of America*, because of its reputation for literature and learning.

Dr. O'Connor will discuss his views that Boston's eminence during the first half of the 19th century was due in great part to a broad community effort to make the city the model for all other cities in the new Republic. Just as the Grecian city of Athens was seen as the Cradle of Civilization for the ancient world, Bostonians saw their own city as the Cradle of Liberty for America.

According to O'Connor, a leadership elite, composed of members of prominent families with substantial wealth and intellectual interests, set out to create a well-ordered city whose citizens would be committed to the ideals of social progress and self-improvement. Not content with their own achievements, this leadership group also insisted that all Bostonians, regardless of their age, gender or class, should have as much "useful knowledge" as possible to improve the quality of their lives, and the lives of their children.

O'Connor, who began teaching at Boston College in 1950 and attained the rank of Professor in 1962 and was named Professor Emeritus in 1993 and appointed University Historian. He has authored a number of books, some of which have been previously the subject of lectures at the Society.

Dr. O'Connor is involved with all the major historical organizations in the state, has been appointed to presidential commissions, and has received many awards and an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Boston College.

DEDHAM SAVINGS FUNDS NEW ALARM SYSTEM

The Dedham Institution for Savings Foundation recently presented the Historical Society with a check for \$5,000 to fund installation of a new smoke alarm system in the Society's building at 612 High Street. Making the presentation to Jim Kaufman, Society President, and Society Executive Director Ron Frazier, were Bill Gothorpe, Bank President, and Jerry Lavoie, Trustee of the Foundation.

The installation of the smoke alarm system, completes a total upgrade of all security systems in the building within the last eight years.

SOCIETY SUPPORTS EXPANSION OF HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The Board of Directors of the Dedham Historical Society recently voted to financially support the historic preservation efforts of Dedham's Historic Districts Commission.

Under the leadership of Chairman Stanton Lyman, the commission is working to expand the boundaries of the existing Dedham Historic Districts.

The commission is redrawing Historic District boundary lines to include the Federal Hill section of Dedham along Highland Street. This initiative follows advice provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Town-wide historic preservation is an important aspect of the Society's mission, noted Society President Jim Kaufman. He thanked Doctors Mary and Richard Scott, for previously establishing a separate fund at the Society specifically for historic preservation projects.

Approximately \$5,700 from this fund will be used to pay for documentation research required by the Massachusetts Historical Commission as part of their approval procedures. The Historic District Commission selected Electa Tritsch former Society director, and her firm Oakfield Research of Concord, to conduct the research, which will examine each structure in the proposed Historic Districts expansion area.

THANKS TO THE OSBORNES AND SAN MARINO

Special thanks to Bob and Mary Anne Osborne and Renato Reda of San Marino Landscaping for their contribution to the beautification of the Historical Society's grounds.

Maryanne and Bob have contributed the plantings on the front stairs of the Society, spring, summer and fall, for a number of years.

San Marino contributed cultivation and mulching around the entire building this year.

Many thanks for the contribution to the beautification of Dedham Square and especially the Historical Society.

WOMEN'S EXCHANGE DONATES TO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Dedham Women's Exchange, a non-profit organization was originally created to provide an outlet to sell hand-crafted goods and home-cooked foods. During the 93 years it has been in existence, it has helped hundreds of consignors from all over the country offer their unique handmade items for sale. As a non-profit organization, the DWE has made significant annual contributions to Dedham and surrounding communities to meet the needs for college scholarships, summer camp funds, programs for the developmentally disabled, school library and art classes, Civic Pride and historic preservation support. The DWE is run by a committed group of women who volunteer their time and expertise.

The Exchange gave \$500 in support of the Society's programming.

Our sincere thanks to the Dedham Women's Exchange for their support.

SOCIETY RECEIVES LUCILLE FAIRFIELD BEQUEST

The Society has received a significant bequest from the estate of Lucille Fairfield, who had been a Life Member of the Society since 1987.

The generous bequest was placed in the Society's "Endowment Fund." According to generally accepted guidelines, our Endowment Fund should be approximately four times its current size, and therefore the gift is especially appreciated.

This provides us with an opportunity to remind members that you may want to give considerations to making a bequest to the Society from your estate. Many people consider this as the ideal way to provide lasting support for their favorite organizations.

HOUSE TOUR AND SOIRÉE ARE GREAT SUCCESSSES

The 2006 House Tour and Soirée were both tremendous successes this year.

We thank Carlota and Mark Taylor who hosted the event at their beautiful 1855-1915 home. Many thanks also to the committee members who planned a wonderful evening: Karen Durham, Chairman, and Denise Beaudoin, Liesl Gilman, Kate Gormley, Ann LeBreton, Beverly Sanchez and Jill Shiel. The torrencial downpour of the evening didn't put a damper on the event at all, as people came in with their flip-flops and boots, and changed before they entered the main house.

The day of the House Tour was peppered with showers, however that didn't deter a very good turnout.

To the gracious home-owners: Ed and Kate Cahill, Virginia Hill Daisey, Sarah and William Ducas, Michael Fitzgerald (MIT Endicott House), Gay and Bunk Read, and The Fairbanks Family in America, we say *Thank you very much*.

We extend special thanks to the committee which did a tremendous amount of work to make this event a major success: Susie Durocher, Chairman, Karen Durham, Liesl Gilman, Kate

Gormley, Margaret Matthews, Mary Anne Osborne, Gina Parker, Clara Potash, Lauie Rabe, Liz Roberts, Marmee Taylor, Julie Tuite, Christine Tuttle, and more than fifty house volunteers. Others who provided special expertise for this event were Tanya Holton, Molly Jackson, Stanton Lyman and Fred Smith. Thank you, one and all.

NEW MUSUEM ACQUISITIONS

Etching, *Dedham Marshes*, by Margaret Philbrick, gift of Otis Philbrick.

Dedham High School 1947 letter for Music, gift of Linda C. Countryman.

Fire Buckets, belonged to Moses Gragg, 19 Court Street, 1827. Purchase, Collections Fund.

Blue Riot Helmet, Dedham Police Department, gift of Officer Michael Feeley.

Tole Metal Trays, painted by Lucy Symonds, gift of Ann T. Devlin.

Wooden Night Stick, Leather Jacket and other accessories, gift of Officer Michael Feeley.

Iron Shoe Forms, gift of Joseph Pagliuca.

Dedham High School Trophies, won by Robert S. Barbe Boyd, gift of his daughter Rev. Elizabeth Boyd Stevens.

Boots, Helmet, Glass Mug, Badges, Patrolman's Duty Hat, Shoulder Radio, Dedham Police Department, gift of Officer Michael Feeley.

Wooden Night Stick, Billy Club, SAP, and Police Badges, Dedham Police Department, gift of Officer Paul Crump.

Dedham's Crystal Palace artifact, plus miscellaneous items, gift of George Gray, Medfield Historical Society.

Pencil/Conte Crayon Sketches by Jane Erin Emmit, of Mary deForest Milton Denny, Mary deForest Willston, plus unknown male, who lived at 986 High Street, gift of Kathryn Peters.

Dedham High School Yearbook, 1931, plus school letter, belonged to Phyllis Ambrose, gift of the estate.

Ruler and Book Mark, used by Officer William Boushell, Dedham Police Department Safety Officer, gift of Sergeant Mike Buckley.

Dedham Police Badges, gift of Sergeant Michael Buckley.

Milk Bottle from the Fisher Dairy, gift of Fire Department Chief James S. Driscoll.

Dedham Pottery Bon Bon Bowl with Sterling Silver Cover, gift of Joseph Shaefer.

Silver Spoon made by Benjamin Bussey. Purchase, Collections Fund.

Ceramic Tile Trivet, depicting the Norfolk & Dedham Insurance Company. Purchase, Collections Fund.

Walking Stick with Solid Gold Embossed Handle, belonged Dedham Congressman Richard Olney, gift of Charles T. Russell.

Gold Wedding Ring, 1851, belonged to Mary F. Fairbanks, gift of Kay Leland, Elizabeth L. Grady and Emily L. Moran.

Trap Door Springfield Rifle, c. 1884, belonged to Charles Eli Adams of Highland Street, gift of William McKibben.

Lace Tablecloth, made by Rose Tutunjian of Dedham **and Stained Glass**, made by Lucy Symonds, gift of Ann Devlin.

Cranberry Rake made by Henry F. Glover of Dedham. Purchase, Collections Fund.

NEW LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

The library and archives are constantly growing. Many items are donated, while many must be purchased because they are important to our history or collections. The following are the latest library acquisitions:

The Care of Fine Books. Purchase

The Commission on Preservation and Access: New Tools for Preservation. Purchase

Preserving Textiles. Purchase

Conservation of Photographs. Purchase.

A to Zax. A Comprehensive Dictionary for Genealogists and Historians. Purchase.

Irish Genealogy. Purchase.

Pointers. Magazine as part of subscription to Italian genealogical publication. Gift of Carol Sestito and William Sestito.

Identifying American Architecture. Purchase.

Buildings on Main Street. Purchase.

A Home on Haven Street by Nahil and Nahil. Gift of MIT Endicott House.

The Pink Boulder Mystery by Ed Stimpson. Gift of Frank Walley Jr.

Contentment. A novel by Raymond E. Sullivan. Gift of the author.

My Likeness Taken. Daguerrean Portraits in America. Purchase.

Massachusetts Industries 1886 Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, Berkshire Counties. Gift of Dedham Fire Department.

Prison Days and Nights by Victor Nelson. Gift of Robert Hanson.

Touring New England On the Trail of the Yankee by Clara Walker Whiteside. Gift of Robert Hanson

Sea Glass by Anita Shreve, a Dedham author. Gift of Kathy Brown.

State Register of Historic Places 2004 (Massachusetts). Anonymous Donor.

Tercentenary of Massachusetts Bay Colony 1630-1935. Previously uncatalogued.

300 Years in Public Education. Previously uncatalogued.

The Oral History Manual. Purchase.

Oral History for the Local Historical Society. Purchase.

Transcribing and Editing Oral History. Purchase.

American Census. Purchase.

Barinelli's War. Novel about the Korean War. Gift of author, Eugene Basilici, a Dedham author.

American Artifacts of Personal Adornment. Purchase.

Ancestry of Dr. Jonathan Fay Gay 1810-1867. Purchase.

Is Your Museum Grant Ready? Purchase.

Digital Imaging. Purchase.

The New England Historical and Genealogical Register. Subscription to publication of New England Historical Genealogical Society.

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island. An Atlas of Historical County Boundaries. John H. Long. Editor. Purchase.

Understanding Colonial Handwriting. Purchase

Dedham Master Plan. Spiral Bound Book.

An Illustrated History of Tinware in America. Information in book on Calvin Whiting and Eli Parsons. Gift of author, Jack Shagena.

Beyond the Horizon of Science by Arthur L. Williston. Author lived at 986 High Street. Gift of Kathy Peters.

Dedham Massachusetts in the Revolution by B. Michael Zuckerman. Transfer from Archives.

Reflections 1943. Yearbook of Dedham High School. Gift of Mrs. Barbara Lyons.

Descendents of Nathaniel Dickinson. Also corrections to the volume. Gift of Mrs. Barbara Lyons.